

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

9TH CIRCUIT COURT - FAMILY DIVISION - NASHUA

IN THE MATTER OF )  
 )  
THOMAS SOBELL, ) Family Division Case No.  
 ) 659-2013-DM-00348  
 )  
 ) Petitioner, )  
 ) Nashua, New Hampshire  
 ) May 1, 2014  
 ) 1:20 p.m.  
 )  
 ) and )  
 )  
PATRICIA SOBELL, )  
 )  
 ) Respondent. )  
 )  
 )

HEARING ON PRE-TRIAL CONFERENCE  
BEFORE THE HONORABLE JULIE INTROCASO  
JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT - FAMILY DIVISION

APPEARANCES:

For the Petitioner: Sandra F. Bloomenthal, Esq.  
BLOOMENTHAL LAW OFFICE  
P.O. Box 6761  
Laconia, NH 03247

For the Respondent: Allen Lucas, Esq.  
LUCAS LAW, PLLC  
PO Box 445  
Wolfeboro, NH 03894

ALSO PRESENT:  
Kathleen Sternenberg,  
Guardian ad Litem

Audio Operator: Electronically Recorded  
\*\*Not Monitored\*\*

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1 (Proceedings commence at 1:20 p.m.)

2 THE COURT: Okay. We are here on 659-2013-DM-348,  
3 the matter of Thomas Sobell and Patricia Sobell.

4 Both parties are here. The Petitioner is  
5 represented by Attorney Bloomenthal; Respondent's represented  
6 by Attorney Lucas. We are also joined by the guardian ad  
7 litem, Kathleen Sternenberg.

8 Before we start the pre-trial conference, Attorney  
9 Sternenberg gives reason for me to talk with counsel. I heard  
10 some preliminary motions in this case, I know, sometime ago.  
11 And at that time, I recall that Mr. Sobell had asked for the  
12 appointment of a guardian ad litem by the Court. And I  
13 indicated, I believe, at that time that there was no fund.  
14 And the only way that we would have a guardian is if one of  
15 the parties were to take financial responsibility for that.

16 And I invited the parties to seek out the assistance  
17 of a guardian if Mr. Sobell felt the need for a guardian and  
18 had the ability to pay. Sometime thereafter, I received an  
19 order on appointment of guardian ad litem form that was  
20 prepared by someone, I assume Petitioner's counsel. And I  
21 approved that on January 30th.

22 And I recognize Attorney Sternenberg's writing, I  
23 believe -- maybe, maybe not -- but her name. Counsel should  
24 know that Attorney Sternenberg and I are very good friends.  
25 Very good friends. I don't know if she shared that with you,



1 or she did not. And I'm going to look at K. -- who I refer to  
2 as K. I don't call her Kathleen or -- K., are we very good  
3 friends?

4 MS. STERNENBERG: Yeah, I think so.

5 THE COURT: Yeah, we are very good friends. Very  
6 good friends like godparent of my child. We are very close.

7 That being said, I have no problem at all in telling  
8 Attorney Sternenberg she's completely wrong about something,  
9 which is probably why she's one of my good friends. We're  
10 both pretty strong women and argue with one another about a  
11 lot of things. We met in the context of being marital  
12 attorneys in a number of cases. So we have a very healthy, I  
13 think, professional respect for one another, but we also have  
14 a pretty strong personal relationship.

15 She is on my conflict list. I would never hear a  
16 case of hers where she was acting as counsel for a party, but  
17 I know she's a guardian ad litem. I also think, by the way,  
18 she's probably one of the best guardian ad litem out there.  
19 I don't appoint her to cases because I don't want anyone to  
20 think that I'm choosing a friend.

21 But you independently found her. And under those  
22 circumstances, I was certainly willing to accept what I  
23 thought was a fine choice for a guardian. So I have a lot of  
24 respect for her, but I also would not necessarily and feel  
25 absolutely feel no obligation -- sorry, K. -- to follow any

